



ERASMUS NEWS

Volume 1, Issue 1 September 2009

From: European Association of Erasmus Coordinators

Erasmus reaches the 2 million students mark

“More and more of Europe’s students are able to participate in Erasmus exchanges. The fact that the programme has helped 2 million students go abroad for studies and placements since its launch in 1987 makes Erasmus a European success story. Research clearly shows that not only mobile individuals, but also their educational institutions and society as a whole greatly benefit from such transnational mobility. Now we would like to build on the success of Erasmus and offer such opportunities to all young people who want to go abroad for learning. To this end, we have recently opened a public consultation on the best strategy to achieve this objective.”

Ján Figel
 European Commissioner for
 Education, Training, Culture
 and Youth.

According to new figures, released on 30 July 2009, the EU’s Erasmus programme for mobility and co-operation in higher education, continues its successful course in the academic year 2007/2008 by enabling more than 162000 European students and 27000 academics to go abroad to study or teach. For the first time Erasmus has also supported as many as 20000 students in doing work placements in companies and organizations in other countries and allowed almost 5000 university staff to pursue training abroad. Student exchanges with Erasmus, counting both studies and placements abroad, grew by 5.2%

compared to 2006/2007, while the increase for study mobility alone was of 2.1%. On the basis of these latest figures, it can be assumed that by mid 2009 Erasmus has exceeded the mark of 2 million students.

The data on Erasmus mobility of students and staff for the academic year 2007/2008, published by Commission on 30 July 2009, shows that during the 21-year period from 1987 to 2008, approximately 1 846 600 students benefited from a study period under the Erasmus programme. In 2007/2008, 162 695 Erasmus students studied abroad. While this represents an annual increase of 2.1% compared to the previous year, the growth rate is slowing down, with 10 countries recording negative growth. In other countries, however, for example in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, the number of outgoing Erasmus students for studies has picked up growth.

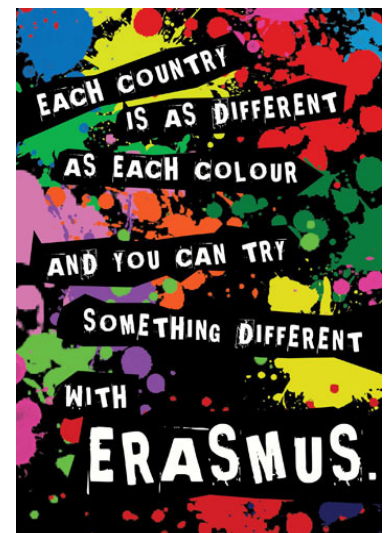
Among the new opportunities offered by Erasmus, student mobility for placements accounted for 20 002 traineeships in 2007/2008 and is likely to expand in the future. There may have been a shift from study to placement mobility within Erasmus. Moreover, with the introduction to staff training Erasmus now addressed everyone in higher education. In 2007/2008, 4833 staff members of higher education institutions went to enterprises and partner institutions abroad to receive training.

The number of teaching assignments continued to increase by

more than 5%. During the academic year 2007/2008 27157 teachers went abroad to teach at partner institution. Since this type of exchange was introduced almost 200 000 teachers and other university staff have participated.

With a total of 182 697 students in 2007/2008 Erasmus student mobility expanded by more than 5% counting all types of student exchanges including placements. At the same time the level of the monthly grant for Erasmus students also increased substantially, to over €250 per month on average for both types of student mobility taken together. This was due a sharp increase in the Erasmus budget for mobility actions, to €372 million in 2007 with the introduction of the EU’s Lifelong Learning Programme.

More detailed statistical information including breakdowns of the latest figures by country on second page.





New figures on participation

In the academic year 2007/2008, Erasmus enabled more than 182 000 European students and 32 000 academics and other staff members to go abroad for studies, placements, teaching or training.

1. Erasmus Student Mobility

1.1. Studies

Erasmus enables students at higher education institutions to spend an integrated period of study of between 3 months and 12 months in another participating country.

162 695 Erasmus students studied abroad in one of the 31 participating countries in the academic year 2007/2008. This represents an annual increase of 2.1% compared to 3.2% in the previous year.

Negative growth was recorded in 10 countries: Germany, France, Belgium, Greece, Sweden, Romania, Norway, Malta and Liechtenstein. For the last five countries, the decrease was between 10% and 15%.

Germany continued to be the biggest sender with 23553 Erasmus students, followed by Spain (23107), France (22556) and Italy (17562). Spain remained the most popular destination for students, receiving 27831 Erasmus students over the year, with France in second place (20503), followed by Germany (17801) and the United Kingdom (15975).

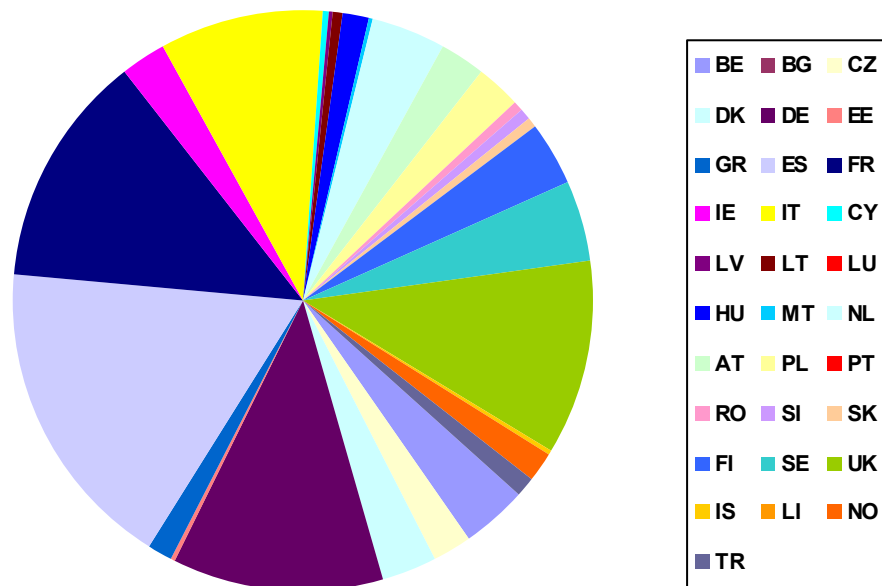
Social sciences, business studies and law was the most popular group of subject areas for Erasmus students, followed by humanities and arts in second and engineering, manufacturing and construction in third place. The average duration of an Erasmus student mobility period was 6.5 months. 62% of the Erasmus students studying abroad were female.

Efforts to increase the average grant that students get from the Erasmus budget have taken the European average monthly grant to €242 in 2007/2008, an increase of 26% on the previous year.

1.2. Placements

Erasmus also enables students at higher education institutions to spend a placement period of between 3 months (or at least two weeks for students in short-cycle higher vocational education) on 12 months in an enterprise or organization in another participating country.

Outgoing Erasmus Student mobility for studies and placements in 2007/2008



Supported until 2007 through the EU's Leonardo da Vinci programme for vocational education and training, enterprise placements for students experienced strong growth after their transfer to Erasmus. 20002 student placements in 2007/2008, compared to approximately 14400 placements in the previous year, represents a strong 38.9% increase.

With 3389 Erasmus students trainees at placements France was the biggest sender, followed by the UK (2755) and Germany (2733). As in study mobility, Spain was the most popular destination for Erasmus students trainees, receiving 3298 over the year, with the UK in second place (3145), followed by Germany (3021).

The most popular sector for Erasmus students trainees was professional, scientific and technical sector, followed by the education sector.

The average duration of an Erasmus placement mobility period was 4.3 months. 62% of the Erasmus students doing a placement abroad were female. The European average monthly grant amounted to €409 in

2007/2008.

1.3. Erasmus Intensive Language Courses

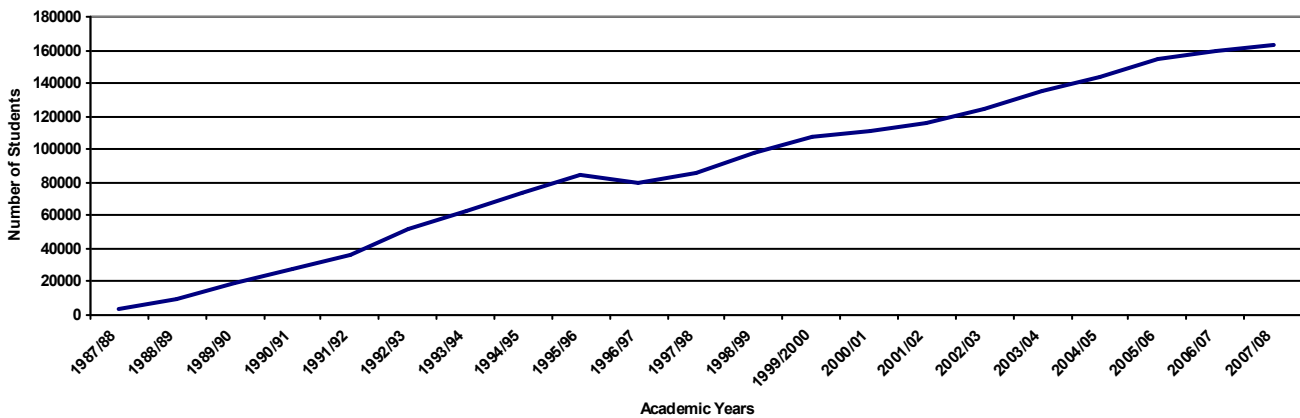
The Erasmus Intensive Language Courses (EILC) are specialized in the EU's less widely used and less taught languages helping Erasmus students prepare for their studies or placements abroad. They are organized in countries where these languages are used as teaching languages at higher education institutions. EILCs are not organized for the most widely taught languages English, German, French and Spanish. In 2007/2008, 303 such courses were organized in 23 countries for a total of 4894 students (4% increase on 2006/2007). The countries most in demand were Italy, Portugal and Belgium.

1.4. Overall student mobility

Despite continued growth in student and teacher mobility in recent years the rate of growth has slowed. In order to reach the EU target of 3 million students by 2012, an annual increase of about 8% would be needed.



Outgoing Erasmus Students from 1987-2008



2. Erasmus Staff Mobility

2.1. Teaching assignments

Erasmus enables staff from higher education institutions and enterprises to spend a teaching period of between 1 day-or at least 5 teaching hours- and 6 weeks at a higher education institution in another participating country.

The number of teachers that benefited from mobility through Erasmus has been steadily increasing in recent years. In the academic year 2007/2008, 27157 teachers participated in Erasmus exchanges, a 5.4% increase compared to the previous year. 23 countries experienced an increase. Since the start of Erasmus teacher mobility in 1997/1998, 193183 teaching assignments took place abroad.

Germany (2681), Spain (2653) and Poland (2462) sent the highest number of teachers and Germany (2927), Italy (2560) and Spain (2510) were the largest recipients of Erasmus teachers. Most countries experienced an increase in outgoing teacher mobility, which was highest in Bulgaria, followed by Poland and Latvia.

Erasmus teachers were most mobile in subject areas as social sciences, business and law; humanities and arts; and engineering, manufacturing and construction.

2.2. Staff Training

Erasmus enables both teachers and other staff of higher education institutions to spend a period of training between 1 week (5 working days) and 6 weeks in an enterprise or organization such as a higher education

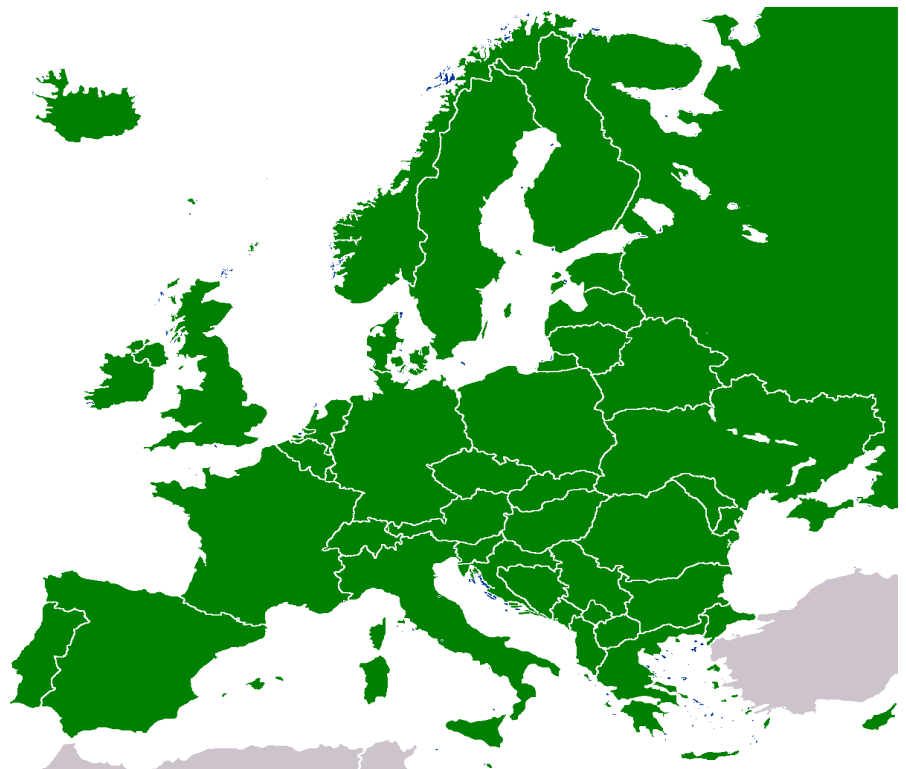
institution in another participating country.

This new opportunity of staff mobility for training abroad was taken up by 4883 participants in 2007/2008. both academic staff and non-academic staff from central administration and support services participated in it. In 2007/2008 52 staff members from enterprises could also go to higher education institution abroad for training.

Poland (652), Latvia (443) and Finland (435) sent the highest number of staff and the UK (615), Germany (555) and Spain (480) were the biggest recipients of Erasmus staff.

3. Erasmus Intensive Programmes

An Intensive Programme (IP) is a short programme of study (10 continuous full days to 6 weeks of subject related work) which brings together students and teaching staff from higher education institutions of at least three participating countries. Newly managed by national agencies, in 2007/2008 255 Erasmus Intensive Programmes were organized. 8932 students and 2725 teachers took part.



Where would European higher education be without the Erasmus programme?

Ján Figel, European Commissioner with responsibility for Education, Training, Culture and Youth, said:

“The Erasmus programme has been the grandfather of some of the biggest reform initiatives in higher education in Europe today. Erasmus paved the way for the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System—ECTS—and the Bologna process, in which 46 European countries have agreed to establish a European Higher Education Area by 2010. This study reinforces my view that Erasmus, which celebrates its 22nd anniversary this year, should be further expanded in the future as a key vehicle for modernizing higher education and promoting mobility opportunities for students.”

The study focused on the impact of Erasmus since its inception in 1987. It is based on a survey to which around 750 institutions' top management and more than 1800 Erasmus Coordinators both at international offices and faculties responded. Its main findings focus on the programme's impact on two levels: policies and institutions.

Erasmus and higher education policy

The Erasmus programme has played a leading role in the internationalization of national, European and international higher education. Erasmus was the driv-

ing force behind the Bologna Process and many actions have been directly drawn from it, such as easily readable and comparable degrees, the establishment of a credit system, quality assurance and the application of joint and double degrees. The programme continues to have an impact on policy in the field of education, for example, by supporting projects to explore new, more sophisticated ways to enhance the transparency of the missions and performances of higher education institutions.

Erasmus and higher education institutions

In addition to the positive impact on students, such as upgraded skills and enhanced employability, which have already been highlighted in previous studies, the institutional impact of Erasmus is considered to be strong, particularly in larger institutions and in the new EU Member States. Student and staff mobility have stimulated the introduction of international offices and support services for mobility but also home students. Erasmus has also had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning as the mobility of international students and teachers has led to the introduction of new teaching methods and exchange of good practices. It is also triggered the modernization and internationalization of university curricula as

well as the transparency and transferability of qualifications such as the generalized use of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). This is attested to by more than 85% of the central Erasmus coordinators consulted.

In the area of research, Erasmus has encouraged active participation in international projects, attendance at conferences and tendering for international projects, all of which has strengthened excellence and competition in the field. In addition, benchmarking and quality standards have become common practice.

An unexpected benefit was that, according to 30% of the participating institutions, results were also achieved in the field of closer cooperation between universities and businesses.

For almost 90% of the central Erasmus coordinators, regular progress was made on giving their institution a more international profile, and nearly 50% reported a high or very high impact when it comes to making the management of higher education institutions more professional. 92% of the higher management agreed that their institution's participation in Erasmus supported institutional changes and modernization.

References:

<http://ec.europa.eu>



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